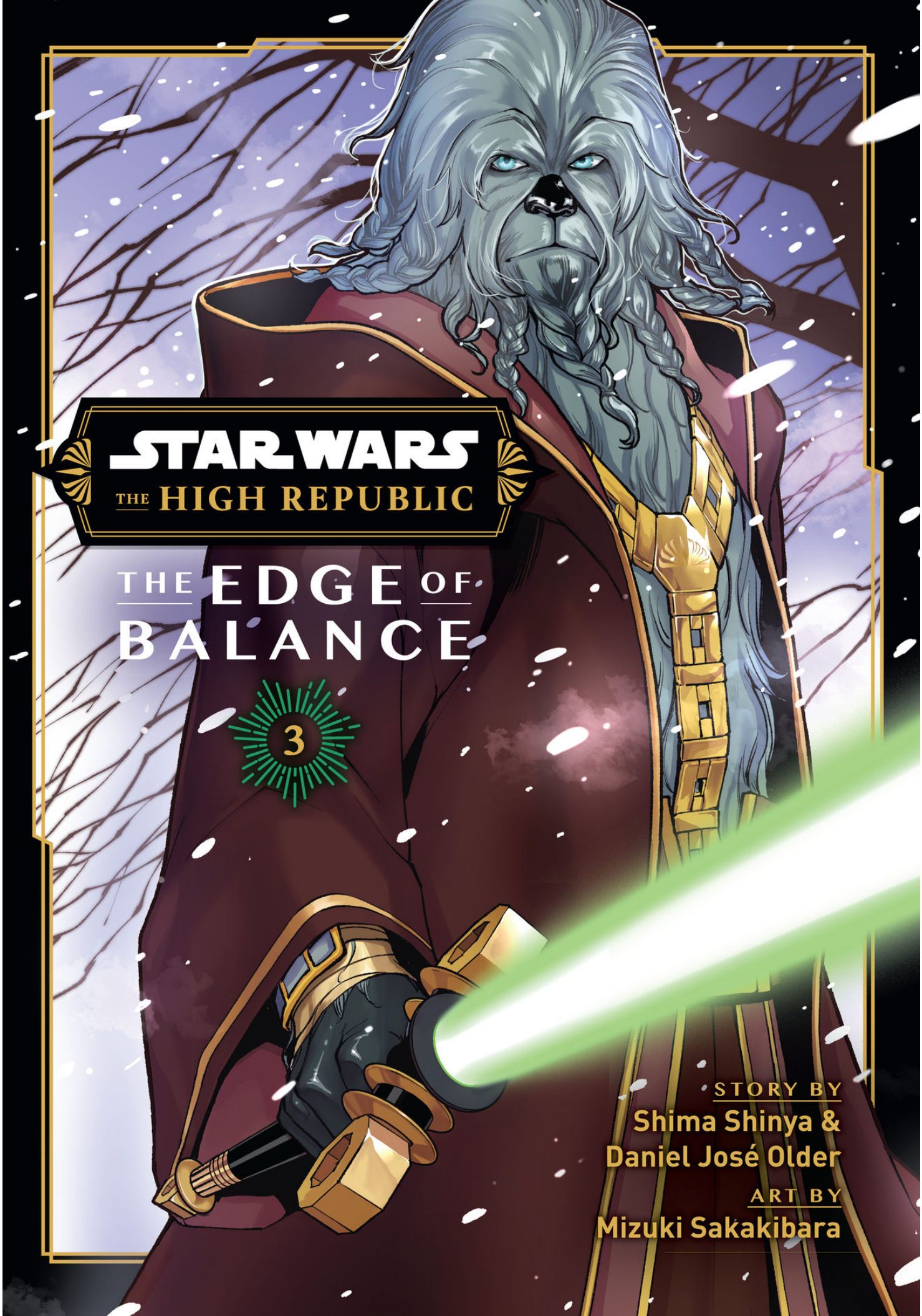

STAR WARS
THE HIGH REPUBLIC
THE EDGE OF BALANCE
3
STORY BY
Shima Shinya &
Daniel José Older
ART BY
Mizuki Sakakibara

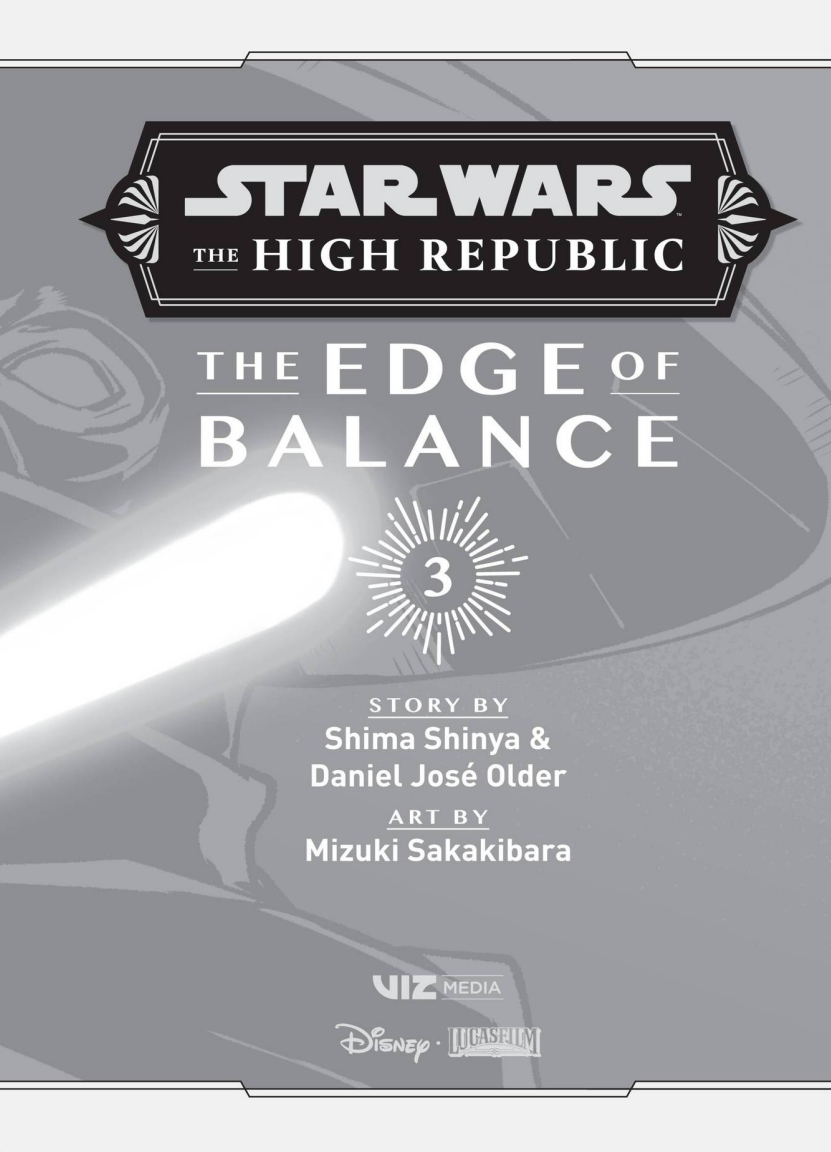
STAR WARS
THE HIGH REPUBLIC
TRIALS OF THE JEDI

Worlds suffer inside the formidable OCCLUSION ZONE, where Marchion Ro and his band of Nihil marauders, untouchable by the Republic, rule with an iron fist.

Jedi Master Avar Kriss has escaped from this occupied space and, along with fellow Jedi Elzar Mann, leads the Jedi and Republic in a desperate fight against the Nihil and their Nameless creatures.

But a new danger now threatens the galaxy. A mysterious BLIGHT has begun to spread randomly across worlds, slowly infecting areas and turning all life in its path to dust....





THE EDGE OF BALANCE

3

STORY BY
Shima Shinya &
Daniel José Older

ART BY
Mizuki Sakakibara

VIZ MEDIA

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STAR WARS
THE HIGH REPUBLIC



THE EDGE OF BALANCE

PART THREE

Story by Shima Shinya and Daniel José Older
Art by Mizuki Sakakibara

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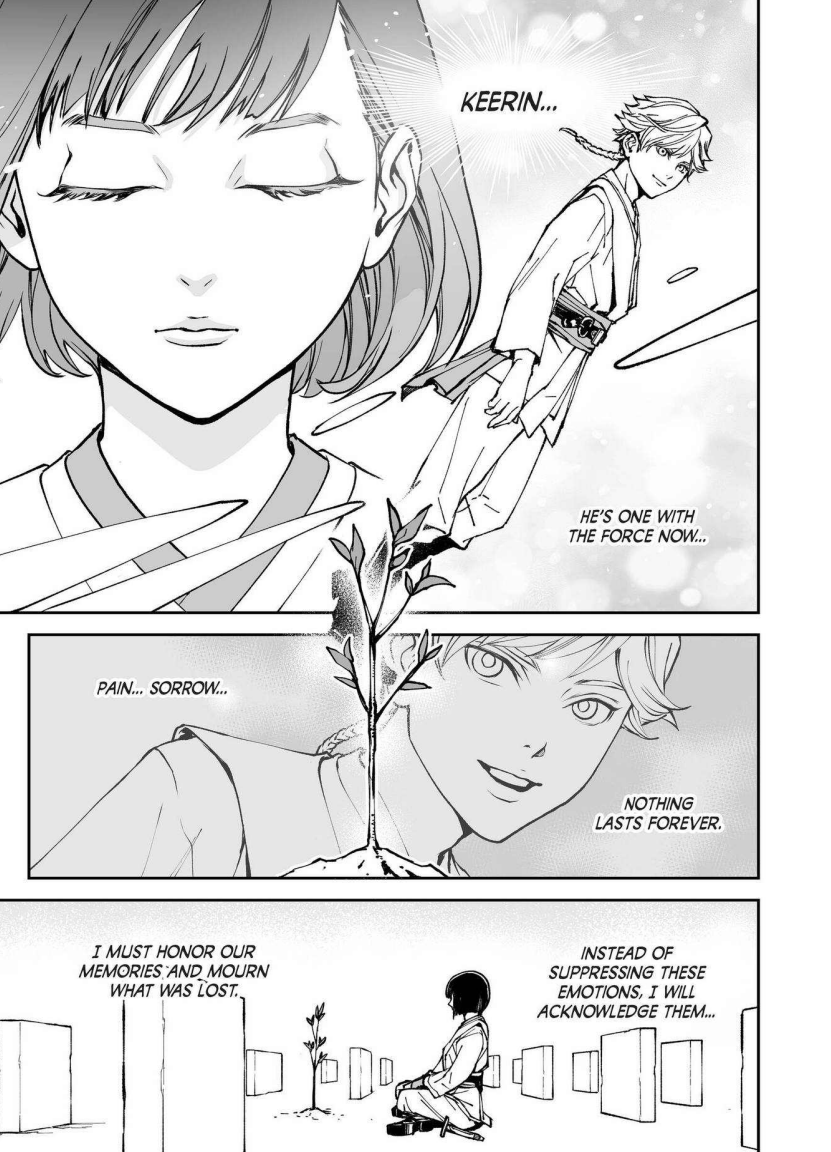
GALLERY

The Art of The Edge of Balance

Development art by Mizuki Sakakibara and Shima Shinya

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BANCHII
RUSTLE


KEERIN...
HE'S ONE WITH THE FORCE NOW...
PAIN... SORROW...
NOTHING LASTS FOREVER.
I MUST HONOR OUR MEMORIES AND MOURN WHAT WAS LOST.
INSTEAD OF SUPPRESSING THESE EMOTIONS, I WILL ACKNOWLEDGE THEM...

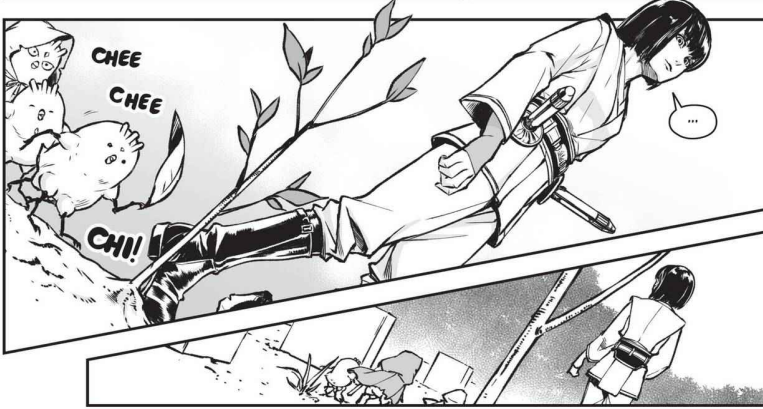

...AND FINALLY LET GO OF MY FEARS.
THESE MIXED EMOTIONS ARE NEW TO ME SINCE COMING TO BANCHII.
THERE WERE MANY THINGS THAT I COULD NOT HAVE PREPARED FOR...
WOOSH
THE PRESENCE OF THE DRENGIR...
...THE ATTACK BY THE NIHIL...
...AND THE DEATHS OF KEERIN AND EVERYONE ELSE IN THE VILLAGE.


...BEFORE, I HAD NEVER...
...ENVISIONED SUCH STRUGGLES.
I USED TO PREPARE FOR A VARIETY OF SCENARIOS SO I WOULDN'T GET CAUGHT OFF GUARD...
...BUT THAT MEANT I ALWAYS CARRIED A SEEDLING OF ANXIETY.
NOW, INSTEAD OF TRYING TO ANTICIPATE THINGS THAT MAY NOT COME TO PASS...
...I WILL RESPOND ACCORDING TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE MOMENT.
I WILL BE AS FLUID AS WATER.
CHI!


!


IS IT TIME ALREADY?


THANK YOU, SHOSHO.
CHI!


CHEE
CHEE
CHI!
...



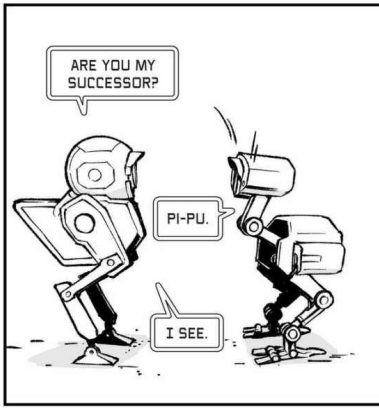

CRUMBL

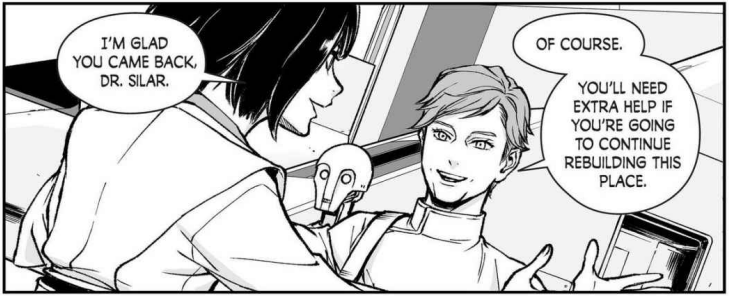

WOOSH
BANCHII,
THE JEDI TEMPLE


GREETINGS, MASTERS.
LILY!
WE THOUGHT YOU WEREN'T GOING TO MAKE IT!
I WOULDN'T MISS THIS!
VWOOOSH

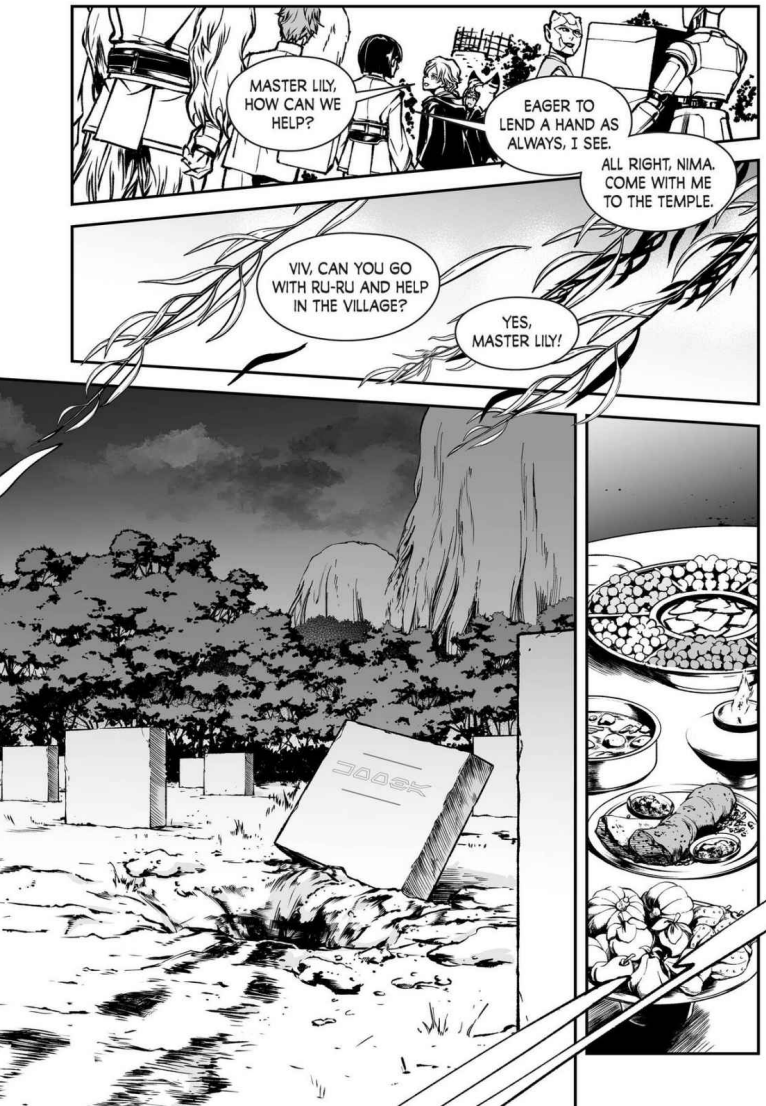

MASTER LILY!
MASTER ARKOFF!
VIV'NIA! NIMA! DID YOU BOTH GET TALLER?
WE DID!
WE TRAINED HARD WITH THE OTHER YOUNGLINGS ON CORUSCANT!
SOON WE'LL UPGRADE OUR LIGHTSABERS, TOO!
THE GUARDIAN PROTOCOLS IMPACTED ALL OF US.
Good to see you, Ri-Ri!


THE NIHIL'S CONTROL OF THE STORMWALL MEANS ALL HANDS ON DECK FOR THE JEDI TO KEEP IT FROM SPREADING...
...SO THEY'VE SPED UP THE TRAINING OF THE YOUNGLINGS.
IN ADDITION, THE STORMWALL HAS EXPANDED OVER ERIADU.


ARE YOU MY SUCCESSOR?
PI-PU.
I SEE.

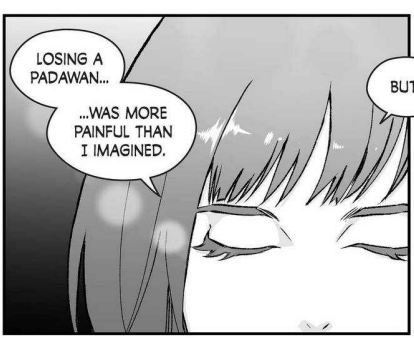

I'M GLAD YOU CAME BACK, DR. SILAR.
OF COURSE.
YOU'LL NEED EXTRA HELP IF YOU'RE GOING TO CONTINUE REBUILDING THIS PLACE.


HONESTLY, I'M SURPRISED THE COUNCIL ALLOWED US TO STAY ON BANCHII AT ALL.
I'VE HEARD OTHER OUTPOSTS ARE MINIMALLY MAINTAINED BY DROIDS ONLY.


MASTER LILY, HOW CAN WE HELP?
EAGER TO LEND A HAND AS ALWAYS, I SEE.
ALL RIGHT, NIMA. COME WITH ME TO THE TEMPLE.
VIV, CAN YOU GO WITH RU-RU AND HELP IN THE VILLAGE?
YES, MASTER LILY!


HA HA HA HA
Is that your second serving?
It's so good!
HROOAGH.
MASTER ARKOFF.

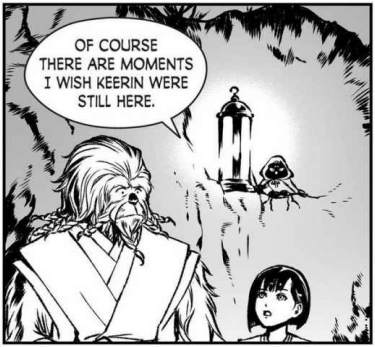

WRRYGNUU AROOGH NRGWWHHRA.
I AGREE.
THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I DIDN'T THINK...
...I WOULD SEE THEM SMILING LIKE THIS AGAIN.
BRYGGHU WRYGGH ARRWHH?
WITH THE YOUNGLINGS BACK IN MY CARE?
PERHAPS THE OLD ME WOULD HAVE BEEN ANXIOUS, ESPECIALLY AFTER WHAT HAPPENED TO KEERIN.
IT WAS DIFFICULT.


LOSING A PADAWAN...
...WAS MORE PAINFUL THAN I IMAGINED.
BUT...


...DURING MY TIME ALONE ON BANCHII, I WAS ABLE TO FACE IT HEAD-ON.
AND I FOUND PEACE.


HROOGHH ARRWOO.
YES.
KEERIN IS WITH THE FORCE...
...AND THE FORCE IS WITH ME AS WELL.


REFLECT, NOT REGRET.
ACT FOR THE MOMENT. DON'T GET CAUGHT UP IN THE PAST.
I CHOOSE THE PRESENT.
EVEN IF ITS UNPREDICTABILITY SCARES ME, IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW.
EVEN...
...OR ESPECIALLY, IF IT CHALLENGES THE PEACEFULNESS I'VE FOUND IN THE FORCE.
AHGHHROO.


OF COURSE THERE ARE MOMENTS I WISH KEERIN WERE STILL HERE.


ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M DEALING WITH MASTER SAV.


DID I HEAR MY NAME?
NO.


ENOUGH WORRYING ABOUT ME.
WHAT ABOUT YOU, MASTER ARKOFF?


I HEARD THAT AZLIN RELL IS STILL ALIVE. THAT HE KILLED ALL THOSE PEOPLE ON TRAVYX PRIME. DO YOU...
DO YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT?


HE WAS YOUR FORMER PADAWAN, RIGHT?
AND HE STRAYED TO THE DARK SIDE?
...
MASTER?
WELL, THEN.


I'M TAKING OFF.
WHAT? RIGHT NOW?
BETTER SOONER THAN LATER.
TO WHERE?
WHERE ELSE?
ASTENBAN!


WHERE'S ASTENBAN?
IT'S A MOON NEAR BANCHII'S MAIN HYPERSPACE ROUTE.
That's the one.
IT'S MOSTLY UNINHABITED.
WHY WOULD YOU...
A BASE STILL REMAINS THERE. IF THE NIHIL GET TO IT FIRST...
...THEY CAN LAUNCH ATTACKS ON BANCHII AND OTHER PLANETS IN THE REGION.
ASTENBAN IS ABOUT TO COMPLETE ITS ORBITAL REVOLUTION.
WHICH WILL PUT IT WITHIN THE STORMWALL.
EXACTLY.
THE NIHIL WILL NOT LET THIS OPPORTUNITY PASS.


IF WE DENY THEM A BASE ON ASTENBAN...
...IT WILL ROB THEM OF AN EASY ACCESS POINT TO REPUBLIC SPACE.


BESIDES...
...WE CAN'T LET THE NIHIL GET TO *IT*.
IT?


AZLIN'S JOURNAL...
...AND THE STOLEN PAGES WE FINALLY RECOVERED.


THE JOURNAL CONTAINS POWERFUL KNOWLEDGE...
...THAT EVEN AZLIN DOES NOT FULLY COMPREHEND.
IT'S THE ONLY INSIGHT ANY OF US HAVE FROM THAT NAMELESS ENCOUNTER ON DALNA.
MASTER EMERICK ALSO SAID THAT IT'S TOO DANGEROUS IF IT'S TRANSPORTED OUT OF BANCHII.
IT MUST BE KEPT SAFE FROM BARON BOOLAN, THE NIHIL'S SO-CALLED MINISTER OF ADVANCEMENT.
THIS IS WHY IT'S IMPERATIVE THAT I LEAVE NOW.
AND YOU'RE DOING THIS BY YOURSELF?


I'LL GO TOO.
I CANNOT LEAVE THIS TO MASTER SAV ALONE.
ZEEZEE!
CHEE!
SHOSHO?!
YOU'RE GOING TOO?
CHI CHI.
BANCHII IS HIS PLANET.
HIS HOME.
OF COURSE HE WANTS TO PROTECT IT.
AND...

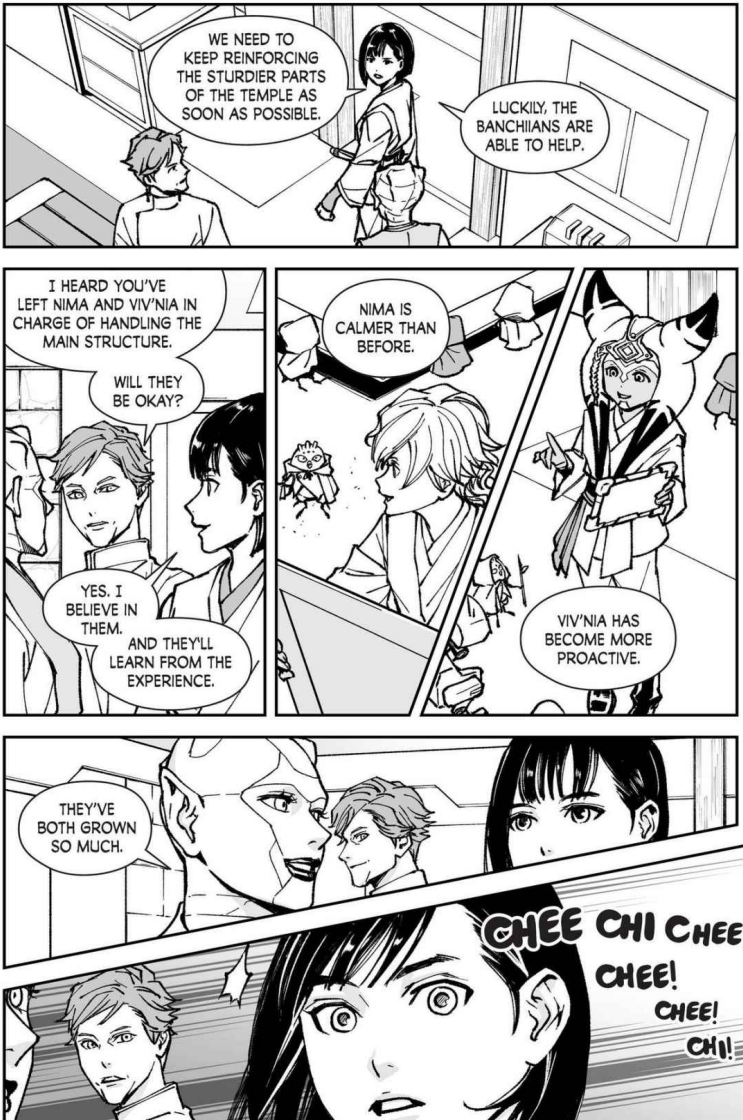

...ADVENTURE IS A NECESSITY IN LIFE, AFTER ALL.
STAY ALERT FOR AN ATTACK BY THE NIHIL.
UNDERSTOOD.
BE CAREFUL, SHOSHO.
CHEE!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT US WHILE YOU'RE AWAY.
WE'LL PROTECT BANCHII.
HEY, LILY.


YOU'VE CHANGED.
IN A GOOD WAY.
THANK YOU.
...
SWP
...?
KEEP AN EYE ON ARKOFF FOR ME.
OF COURSE, MASTER SAV.


VWOOOOOM
MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU!


CHEE
CHI
CHEE
CHEE
CHI!


THERE'S STILL A LONG WAY TO GO UNTIL WE CAN CALL THIS A MEDICAL FACILITY AGAIN...
...BUT NOW WE'RE ABLE TO CARE FOR THE WOUNDED AT LEAST.
GOOD WORK, DR. SILAR.
YOUR RETURN WAS A PRIORITY...
...SINCE WE DON'T KNOW IF OR WHEN WE'LL BE ATTACKED.
I'VE BEEN...
...SENSING A DISTURBANCE IN THE FORCE.
IS IT THE NIHIL?
THEIR NEXT ATTACK MAY BE MORE SEVERE.
I CAN ONLY HOPE THAT THIS FACILITY WILL BE ENOUGH.


WE NEED TO KEEP REINFORCING THE STURDIER PARTS OF THE TEMPLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
LUCKILY, THE BANCHIIANS ARE ABLE TO HELP.
I HEARD YOU'VE LEFT NIMA AND VIV'NIA IN CHARGE OF HANDLING THE MAIN STRUCTURE.
WILL THEY BE OKAY?
YES. I BELIEVE IN THEM.
AND THEY'LL LEARN FROM THE EXPERIENCE.
NIMA IS CALMER THAN BEFORE.
VIV'NIA HAS BECOME MORE PROACTIVE.
THEY'VE BOTH GROWN SO MUCH.
CHEE CHI CHEE!
CHEE!
CHEE!
CHI!


WHAT'S WRONG?!
VIV?!
RUN...
Ugh...
WHO WAS THAT?
NIMA, LOOK!
RUN...


RUN!
WHAT'S GOING ON? NO ONE ELSE SHOULD BE HERE!
THE DISTURBANCE IN THE FORCE IS STRONG...
...LIKE WHEN THE DRENGIR ATTACKED.
RUN!


WHO WAS THAT?
AND THAT VOICE...
NIMA! VIV!
ARE YOU OKAY?!
YES, MASTER LILY.
THEY'RE GONE NOW, BUT SOMEONE WAS OVER THERE.
WHO?!
I COULDN'T SEE CLEARLY, BUT...
...IT LOOKED LIKE...
...MR. KOOBA.


THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.
MR. KOOBA IS DEAD.
COULD IT BE THE DRENGIR?
HAVE THEY RETURNED?
PERHAPS IT WAS YOUR IMAGINATION.
BUT...
...WE HEARD THE VOICE TOO.
IT TOLD US TO RUN.
WHAT IN THE STARS...

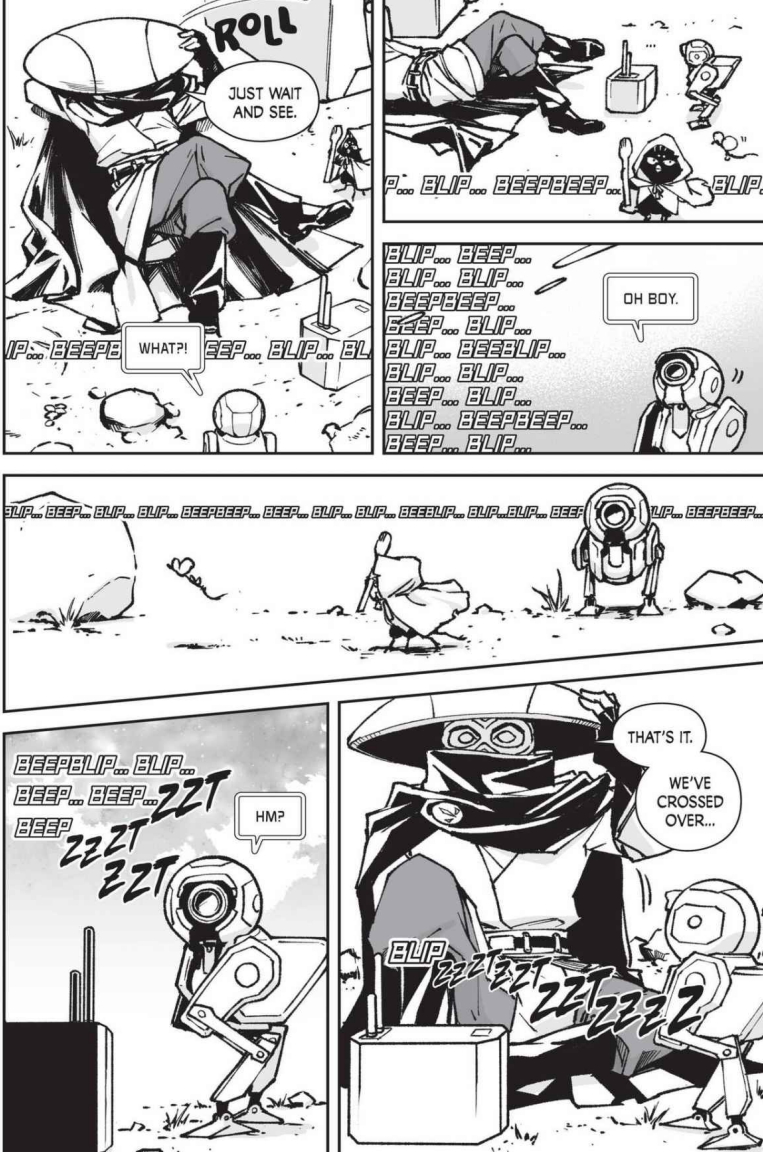

SOMETHING IS HAPPENING.
WRRYAGGH.
I AGREE.
WE NEED TO CONTACT CORUSCANT.
ZZZZZZ
SSHHH


ASTENBAN
FSSHHH


AH...
SO THIS IS ASTENBAN.
IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE THE NIHIL HAVE COME THROUGH YET.
THEY PROBABLY WON'T UNTIL THIS MOON IS WITHIN THEIR STORMWALL.
OH, I ALMOST FORGOT.
KLIK
?


KA-BOOM
THAT'S A GOOD EXPLOSION.
WHAT?!
WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!
CHEE?!
SO WE WON'T BE DISCOVERED.
WE NEED TO PRESERVE OUR ELEMENT OF SURPRISE.
BUT HOW WILL WE GET BACK?!
WE WILL TAKE *THEIR* SHIP.
HA HA!


IS IT ACTUALLY STRATEGIC...
...OR DO YOU JUST LIKE BLOWING THINGS UP?
BOTH CAN BE TRUE.
RUSTLE
THIS LOOKS LIKE A GOOD SPOT.
WHAT DID YOU BRING?
THUNK
A COMM UNIT.
BEEP... BLIP... BLIP... BEEPBEEP...
BLIP... BEEBEEP... BLI
GOOD, WE HAVE A CLEAR SIGNAL...
I DON'T RECOGNIZE THE TRANSMISSION...
IT'S JUST GENERAL INFORMATION, COMING FROM ERIADU.
THE NEARBY PLANET?
WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO WITH IT?
BEEP... BLIP... BLIP... BEEPBEEP... BEEP... BLIP... BLIP... BLIP... BLIP...


ROLL
JUST WAIT AND SEE.
WHAT?!
BLIP... BEEP...
BLIP... BLIP...
BEEPBEEP...
BEEP... BLIP...
BLIP... BEEBLIP...
BLIP... BLIP...
BEEP... BLIP...
BLIP... BEEPBEEP...
BEEP... BLIP...
OH BOY.
BEEPBLIP... BLIP...
BEEP... BEEP... ZZT
BEEP ZZZT ZZT
HM?
THAT'S IT.
WE'VE CROSSED OVER...
BLIP ZZZT ZZT ZZT ZZZZ


ZZZZZHHHHT
...INTO NIHIL SPACE.
YOU WERE MONITORING WHEN THE STORMWALL WOULD CUT OFF THE TRANSMISSION?
THAT'S RIGHT.
LET THE FUN BEGIN!
ZZZZHHT
CHI!
VSHHHHH


JUST AS I THOUGHT, THE NIHIL WERE WAITING.
IT'S GOING TO GET BUSY.
CHEE!
SHOSHO, YOU'RE PRETTY NIMBLE.
CAN I ASK YOU TO GO ON A RECON MISSION?
CHI!
MASTER SAV, WHAT WILL YOU BE DOING?
KLANG
THUD
ROLL
MY FAVORITE THING, OF COURSE!
FWIP


CORUSCANT
A MYSTERIOUS FIGURE BACK FROM THE GRAVE, HMM?
WHAT MORE WILL THE JEDI HAVE TO DEAL WITH?
GO ON, TORA-ASI.
YES, MASTER YODA.
HE WAS TURNED INTO WOOD BY THE DRENGIR.
WE DIDN'T SEE HIM CLEARLY, THOUGH.
HE TOLD US TO RUN, THEN DISAPPEARED.
HM...
INVESTIGATE THOROUGHLY, WE SHOULD.
BUT YOU WILL NEED HELP.

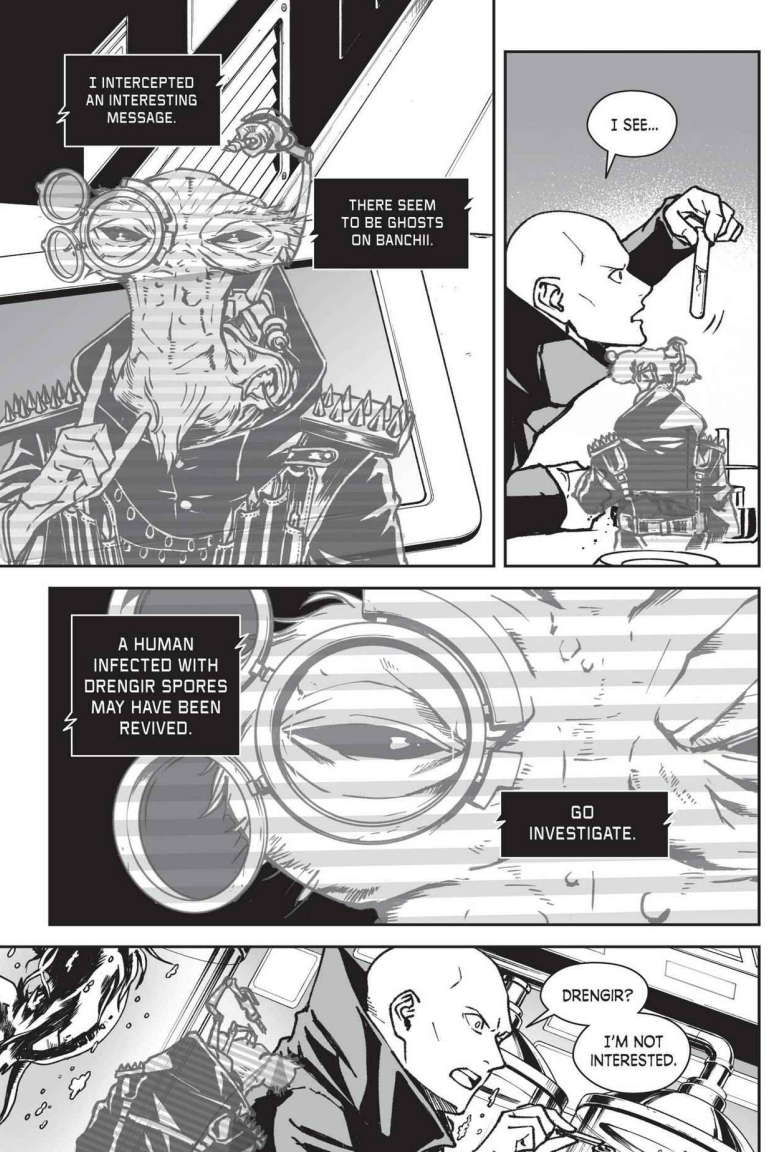

MMRRYGGRHHH?
HM, YES.
USE HIS HELP, WE MUST.
JEDI TEMPLE
DETENTION CENTER
AZLIN RELL...
...AN ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU, I HAVE.
MASTER YODA. IT'S ALWAYS GOOD TO SEE YOU.
DO THE JEDI REQUIRE MY HELP AGAIN?

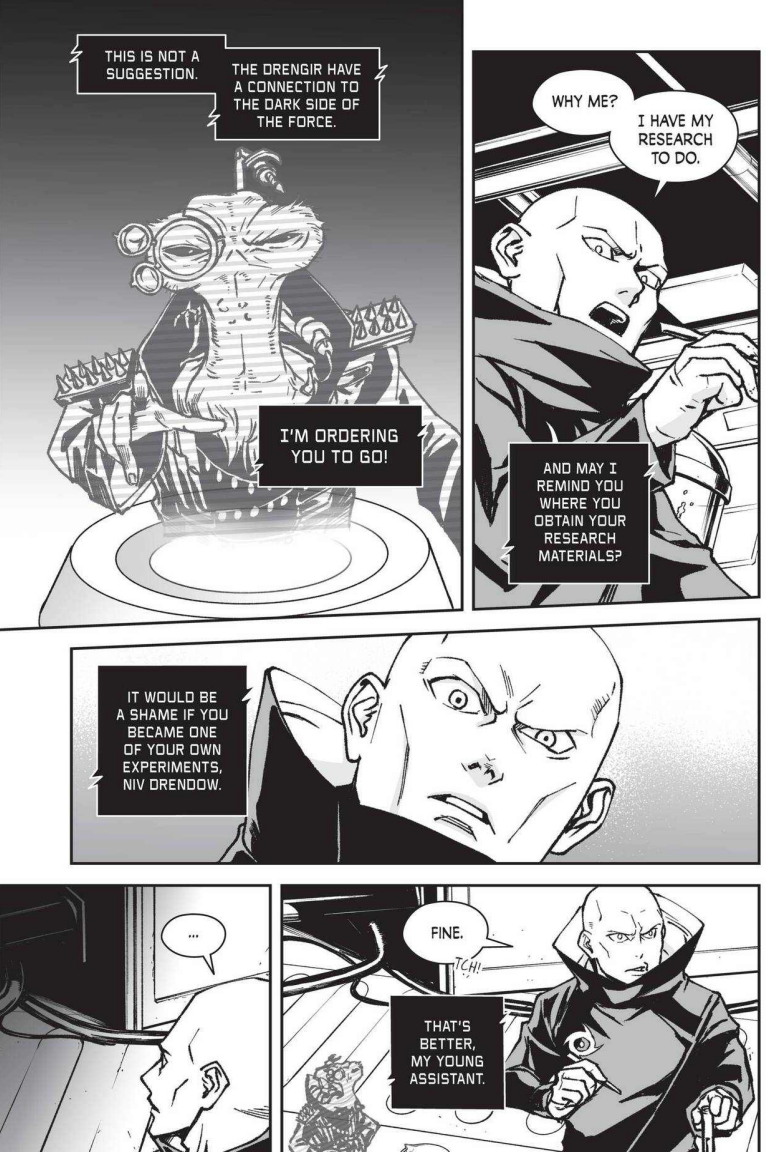

AT BANCHII IS YOUR JOURNAL.
WE DO NOT KNOW IF THE DRENGIR HAVE RETURNED THERE.
BUT IT IS STILL UNDER NIHIL THREAT, HMM?
SOMETHING IS STIRRING. UNDERSTAND IT, WE DO NOT.
REACH BANCHII THE JEDI CANNOT, IF THE PLANET ENTERS THE OCCLUSION ZONE.
THAT IS... INTRIGUING.
WAS THE ONE WHO REPORTED THIS...
MASTER ARKOFF.
AN INVESTIGATION, HE REQUESTED.
...
JUST BECAUSE IT'S MY OLD JOURNAL, DOESN'T MEAN IT'S NECESSARY FOR ME TO GO.


ONLY AFTER FIRST DOING CAN YOU DECIDE NECESSITY, HMM?
...
IT SEEMS I HAVE LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO HELP.
IT IS DECIDED THEN, HMM?
AZLIN RELL, IN REATH SILAS'S CARE YOU WILL BE.
TMP
BUT MASTER YODA, WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, I STILL HAVE WORK TO DO HERE.
WE'VE FOUND A CONNECTION BETWEEN THE NAMELESS AND THE BLIGHT, AND—
CONNECTED, ALL OF THESE EVENTS MAY BE.
EXPERIENCE DEALING WITH THE DRENGIR, YOU HAVE, HMM?
YES. I UNDERSTAND, MASTER.


BUT AFTER WHAT HAPPENED ON TRAVYX PRIME, WILL THE COUNCIL APPROVE OF AZLIN GOING ON THIS MISSION?
TRUST IN THE FORCE, YOUNG SILAS.
AND I SHALL TRUST IN YOU.
BUT TO SATISFY THE COUNCIL, JOIN YOU *I* WILL.
AZLIN.
PERHAPS GOOD IT WILL DO YOU...
...TO SEE YOUR OLD MASTER.
...


WITHIN THE OCCLUSION ZONE
BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP-BEEP BEEP
UGH! WHAT NOW?!
CAN'T YOU SEE I'M BUSY?!
BEEP BEEP
NIV DRENDOW APRUK SPEAKING.
PLIP
WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG TO ANSWER?
APOLOGIES. I WAS BUSY, BARON BOOLAN.
WITH YOUR FRIVOLOUS EXPERIMENTS?
TCH!
MAY I ASK WHAT YOU NEED, BARON?


I INTERCEPTED AN INTERESTING MESSAGE.
THERE SEEM TO BE GHOSTS ON BANCHII.
I SEE...
A HUMAN INFECTED WITH DRENGIR SPORES MAY HAVE BEEN REVIVED.
GO INVESTIGATE.
DRENGIR?
I'M NOT INTERESTED.


THIS IS NOT A SUGGESTION.
THE DRENGIR HAVE A CONNECTION TO THE DARK SIDE OF THE FORCE.
I'M ORDERING YOU TO GO!
WHY ME?
I HAVE MY RESEARCH TO DO.
AND MAY I REMIND YOU WHERE YOU OBTAIN YOUR RESEARCH MATERIALS?
IT WOULD BE A SHAME IF YOU BECAME ONE OF YOUR OWN EXPERIMENTS, NIV DRENDOW.
...
FINE.
TCH!
THAT'S BETTER, MY YOUNG ASSISTANT.


I'M SENDING A SHIP.
GATHER SUPPLIES AND TROOPS BEFORE HEADING TO BANCHII.
FINE, FINE.
PLIP
WHAT A HASSLE.
BUT...
SWF
...I'LL DO ANYTHING...
...TO SEE YOU FEED AGAIN.


BANCHII
CHEE
CHCHI
EEP!
RUSTLE
W-WHAT WAS THAT?!


DON'T WORRY, IT'S HARMLESS.
JUST THE WIND.
MASTER LILY...
OH...
WOOOSH
I KNOW YOU'RE ANXIOUS AFTER SEEING THAT MYSTERIOUS FIGURE.
BUT HE HASN'T CAUSED ANYONE HARM.
AS JEDI, YOU MUST HAVE PATIENCE AND UNDERSTANDING FOR WHAT YOU DO NOT KNOW.


FOR EXAMPLE, THE WIND. PEOPLE IN THE PAST WOULDN'T KNOW WHY IT BLEW.
NOW IT'S A PHENOMENON WITH A NAME.
EVENTUALLY, WE WILL UNDERSTAND THE ORIGIN OF THE FIGURE.
THE ANSWER WILL REVEAL ITSELF SOON ENOUGH.
WHAT WE KNOW *NOW* IS THAT WE ARE CLOSE TO NIHIL SPACE.
OUR FOCUS SHOULD BE ON PREPARING FOR A POTENTIAL NIHIL ATTACK.
YES, MASTER LILY!
YOU'RE RIGHT.
AS YOU POINTED OUT...
...I MAY HAVE LOST FOCUS AS WELL.


WE NEED TO STAY CALM...
...OR IT MAY WORRY THE BANCHIIANS.
WE NEED TO DO AS MUCH AS WE CAN FOR NOW.
WHAT CONCERNS ME MORE IS...


SHRII...
...KA...
...RAI
KA...
RAI...


VOOOM
VWEEEEN
VWEEEEN


CHEE CHI CHEE CHEE CHEE CHI CHEE!
VWEEEEEEEN
VWEEEEEEEN
VWEEEN
NOW WHAT?!
CHI CHEE
SOMETHING SET OFF THE SENSORS...
CHEE
CHEE
IS IT MR. KOOBA AGAIN?
CHI
CHI!
CHI
CHEE
CHEE
SOMEONE'S COMING!


THERE ARE MORE OF THEM!
MASTER LILY! WHAT SHOULD WE DO?
THEY ARE...


...THE CIVILIANS WHO WERE TURNED INTO WOOD BY THE DRENGIR.
THEN...
...THEY REALLY CAME BACK TO LIFE?
WAIT!
CHI!
CHI!
CHEE!
I DON'T SENSE MALICIOUS INTENT. THEY ARE NOT HERE TO HARM US.
THEN WHAT COULD THEY WANT?
I NEED A CLOSER LOOK...


THESE ARE DEFINITELY JUST WOOD.
THEY ARE NO LONGER HUMAN.
HOW DO THEY MOVE?
WE DIDN'T HEAR THE VOICE THIS TIME...
WHAT DO THEY WANT?
I DON'T KNOW.
BUT THEY'RE NOT HERE TO HARM US.
...
EVERYONE, LET'S CALM DOWN.
MASTER YODA IS COMING SOON TO HELP INVESTIGATE THE MATTER.
WE SHOULD GET BACK TO WORK.


ARE WE GOING TO LEAVE THEM HERE?
THEY'RE NOT ATTACKING US.
THEY'RE STANDING HARMLESSLY.
JUST LIKE TREES.
MASTER ARKOFF.
DO YOU AGREE?
AAGROOGH WGYYR.
YES...
...I WILL KEEP AN EYE OUT TOO.
ASTENBAN

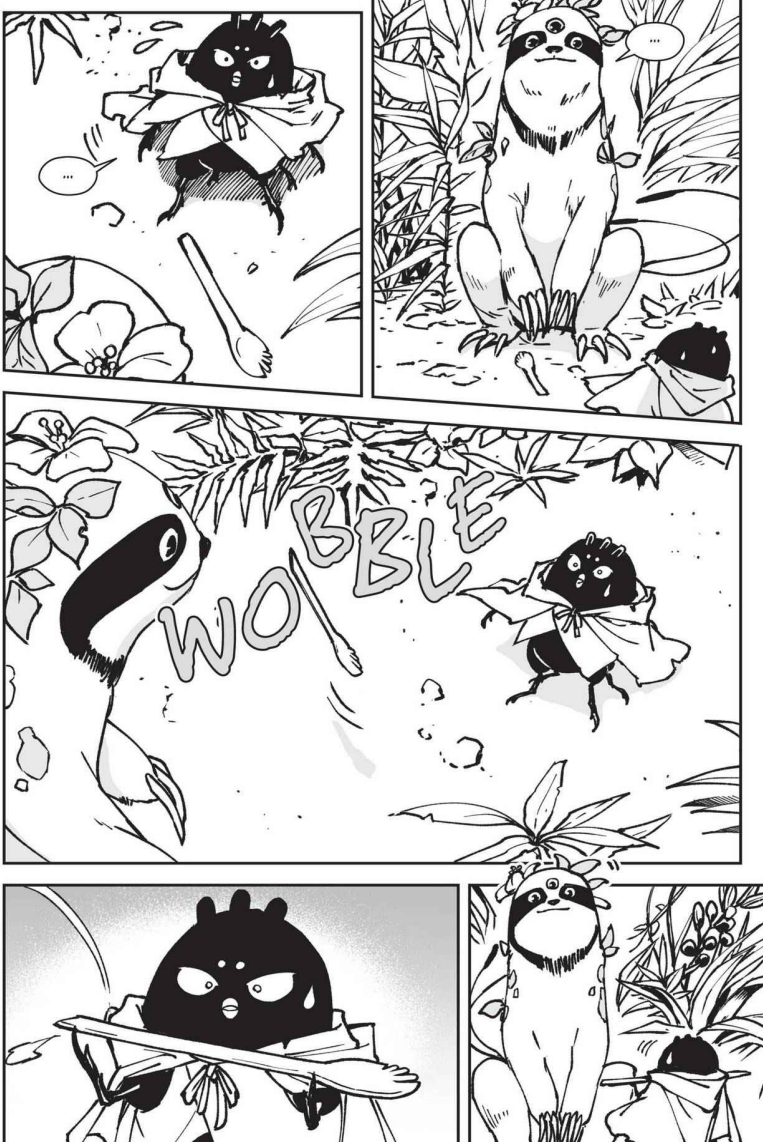

ONE...TWO... THREE...
THEY SEEM TO HAVE BROUGHT A LOT.
RUSTLE
TOO BAD IT'S ALL GOING TO GET BLOWN UP.
RUSTLE
HMMM. DID I BRING ENOUGH EXPLOSIVES?
I'LL NEED TO MAKE SURE THEY'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACES...
...
HOW RARE FOR YOU TO BE SO METICULOUS.
I GUESS LILY RUBBED OFF ON ME.
BUT IN THIS CASE, I'M GRATEFUL FOR IT. ACCURACY WILL BE KEY.
BY THE WAY, HOW FAR DID SHOSHO GO?
HE SHOULD BE RETURNING SOON.

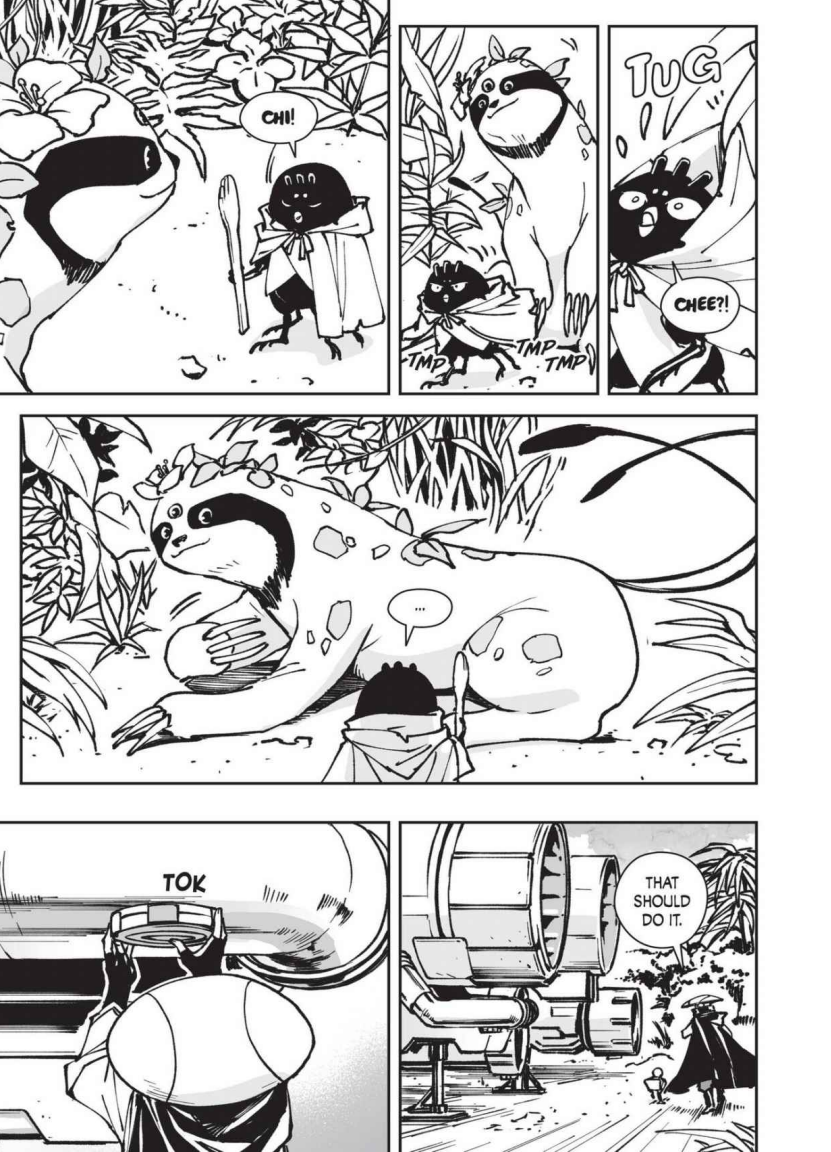

RUSTLE
WOOSH!
SWSHH
IS THERE ANYTHING TO EAT ON THIS MOON?
EVEN IF THERE WERE, YOU'RE SUCH A BAD SHOT THAT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO KILL IT.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE


WATCH ME. ALL I NEED IS ONE SHOT.
SWF
TAK
THUMP
SKSHHH
KCHK
THERE!
KSHOOM
KSHOOM


THE NOISE CAME FROM THIS WAY.
SHOOT IF YOU SEE ANY MOVEMENT.
RUSTLE
KSH
KSH
OVER THERE?!
!
RUSTLE


HEY!
OVER THERE!
ZZWIP
IT WENT THAT WAY!
IT'S GETTING AWAY
GET IT!
RUSTLE
ZWOOP
CHEEE!


...
...
WOBBLE


CHI!
TMP
TMP
TMP
TUG
CHEE?!
...
TOK
THAT SHOULD DO IT.


HM?
RUSTLE
CHEE!
ZWI
SHH
OUR TRIO HAS NOW BECOME A QUARTET.


BANCHII
THANK YOU FOR COMING...


...MASTER YODA.
ARKOFF.
I'D SAY IT'S NICE TO SEE YOU, BUT...
HM. THE REBUILDING OF THE TEMPLE IS GOING WELL.
MASTER.


I'M SORRY I DISOBEYED THE ORDER TO RETURN TO CORUSCANT.
SORRY, YOU ARE?
FOR WHAT, HMM?
OH, I...
YOU'VE FOUND WHAT YOU OUGHT TO DO HERE, HAVE YOU NOT?


YOU SAW YOUR PATH WHERE YOU WERE NEEDED.
A MISTAKE THAT WAS NOT.
NOT THINKING FOR YOURSELF, JUST FOLLOWING ORDERS...
...A MISTAKE THAT WOULD BE.
YOU UNDERSTAND THAT AS A JEDI KNIGHT, HMM?
I DO, MASTER.


They are still dead?
Most likely.
Hmm.


THE GRAVES OF THOSE WHO TURNED INTO WOOD WERE EMPTY.
IT SEEMS OUR ASSUMPTIONS WERE WRONG.
HMM?
THE UNDEAD ARE NOT COMING AFTER US.
SINCE ARRIVING ON BANCHII, I'VE BEEN SENSING FEAR FROM EVERYONE...
...INCLUDING THE DRENGIR.


FEAR OF WHAT?
...
I DON'T KNOW.
THEY'RE SO AFRAID THAT THEY'RE TELLING US TO RUN?
YOU CLAIM TO KNOW ABOUT FEAR, GIRL?
...!
NO. PLEASE CONTINUE.
PERHAPS THEY SHARE A COMMON FEAR.
PERHAPS THEY FEAR THE NAMELESS.
OR PERHAPS THEY FEAR SOMETHING WORSE.
INVESTIGATE FURTHER, WE MUST. REVEAL ITSELF, THE TRUTH WILL.


WE SHOULD DISSECT THESE CREATURES TO INVESTIGATE FURTHER.
WHAT?!
BUT I DON'T SENSE ANY HOSTILITY FROM THEM.
I'VE CONFRONTED THE DRENGIR, THIS IS NOT THE SAME.
ALSO, THEY CAME AND TOLD US TO "RUN."
I KNOW SOMETHING IS DIFFERENT.
I UNDERSTAND YOUR CONCERN...
...BUT AS THE LEADER IN CHARGE OF PROTECTING THIS TEMPLE, IS THAT REASONABLE?
AGRYYRRG.


ARKOFF...
WRGHHYR HROO.
WITH ME ALONE?
...
VERY WELL.


MGYYRG HRRGYYR.
I SHOULD HAVE DIED LONG AGO.
I DIDN'T THINK WE'D MEET AGAIN EITHER.
THE LAST TIME I SAW YOU...
SST


ZAAA
AAHH
AGYMRGH.
NO.
FWP
IT'S NOTHING.
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD BE IN CHARGE HERE.
NOT A YOUNG KNIGHT.
YYGRGH HROOGHR.
HMPH. YOU HAVE A LOT OF FAITH IN HER.
SHE SEEMS TOO NAIVE AND INEXPERIENCED.
MRRGHHR AROOGHHRR.
STRONG COMMUNICATION AND EMPATHY?
SO THAT'S HOW SHE ESTABLISHED RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE ON THIS PLANET.


DLOOOOP
URGH!
HNNGHHR.
SORRY.
CONTINUE.
...
AGGROOGH HRMMRGYM AGHHRR.


PERHAPS SHE WAS LUCKY SHE WAS ABLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH THOSE HERE.
BUT WHAT ABOUT THOSE SHE CANNOT COMMUNICATE WITH?
IN THIS CASE, WE DON'T KNOW WHAT THEIR OBJECTIVES ARE.


SHE HAS YET TO KNOW...
...WHAT FEAR IS.


I KNOW...
...WHAT FEAR TRULY LOOKS LIKE.
ARRGHGRR.
WHAT?!
ARE YOU REALLY QUESTIONING WHAT FEARS *I* HAVE FACED SINCE DALNA?
HOW DARE YOU?!
YOU CANNOT IMAGINE THE ***HORRORS*** I'VE ENDURED THROUGHOUT THESE ENDLESS YEARS.
I'VE ***SEEN*** THEM.
GRAB
?!


LET GO...
SSHH
AH...
WRRGYR NYRRRH.
I KNEW THAT YOU TRIED TO SAVE ME BACK THEN.
BUT I WAS CONSUMED BY FEAR.
MYRRGHRR.
NONSENSE.


EMPATHY WILL NOT SAVE ME.
HNNGRR.
OH, MY DEAR MASTER ARKOFF...
...I'M LONG PAST SAVING.
HROOGHR GYRRGH.
YES, I KNOW. THE LIGHT PREVAILS.
AS IT ALWAYS DOES.


I'VE LOOKED INTO THE LIGHT.
IT IS *BLINDING*.
AGHRROHH.
AND WHAT DO I SEE WHEN I LOOK AT *YOU*?


I SEE...
...MEMORIES...
FINALLY...
...I SEE YOU.
MRRGHYR RRHRRGHYR.
THANK YOU...
...MASTER.


ASTENBAN
NIHIL BASE
LET'S SEE.
WHEN SHOULD WE MAKE OUR MOVE?
YOUR NAME...
...WAS ZIMTOK, CORRECT?
CHI!
YOU'RE GOING TO HELP US OUT?

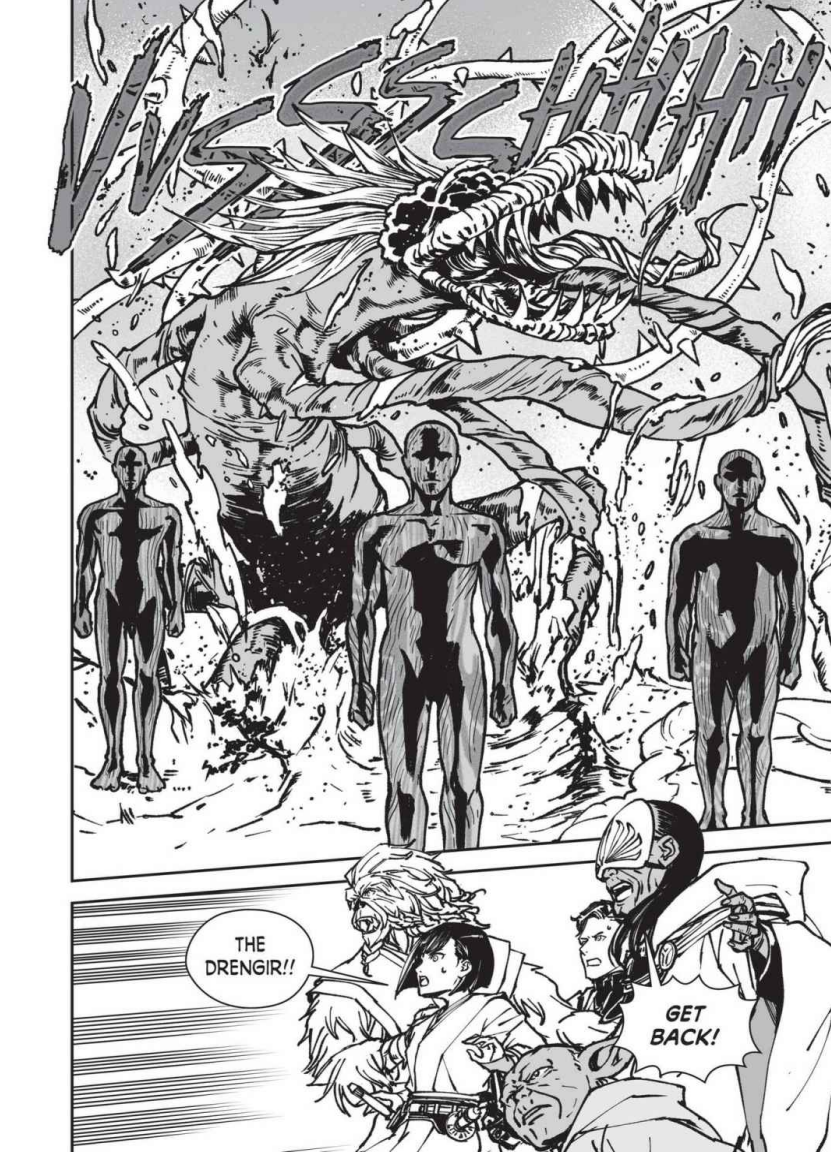

GGT
WHAT ABOUT THEIR BASE?
...
...?
OH...
...DID THEY BUILD IT WHERE YOUR HOME WAS?
I SEE...

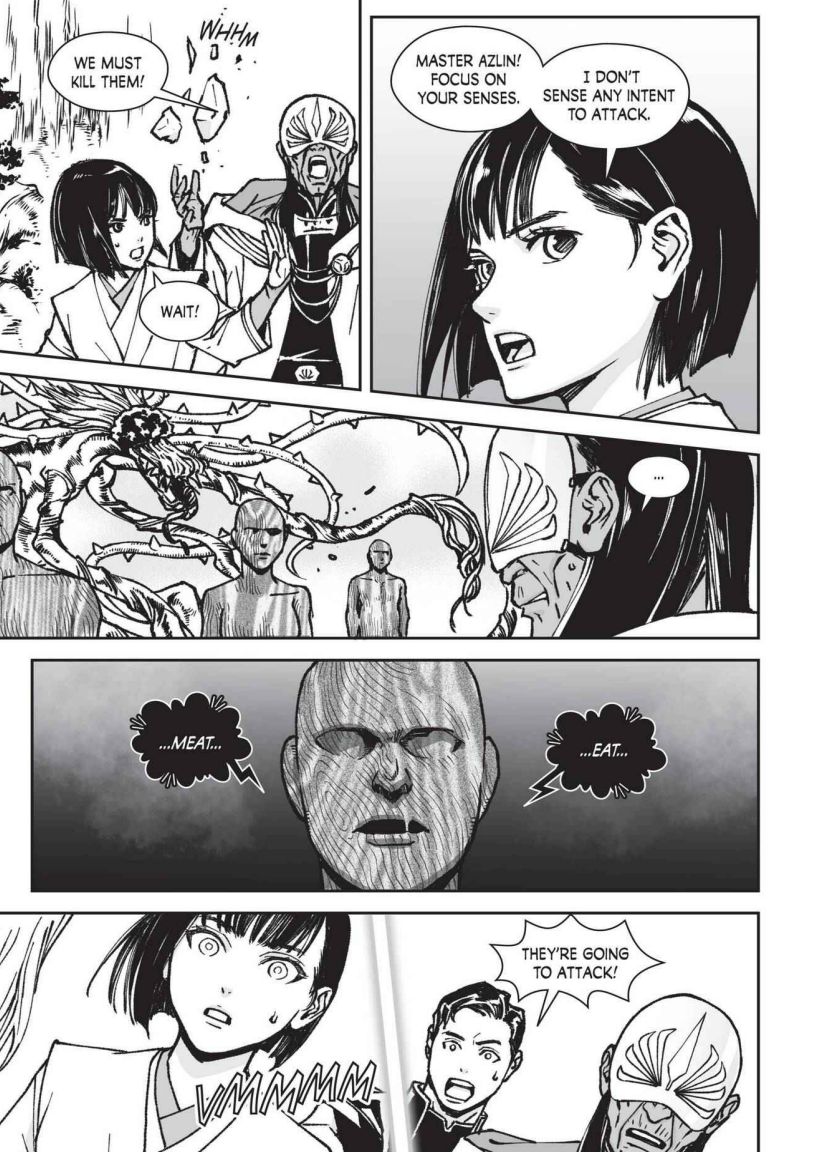

I'M GLAD YOUR HOME WASN'T NEAR THE VECTOR I BLEW UP.
?
Oh, nothing.
!
FLOAT
CHI!
TMP
CHI!
LOOKS LIKE THEY'VE BECOME BEST FRIENDS.
IT SEEMS LIKE ONE WHO IS STRONG IN THE FORCE.
VRRSSHHH


ANOTHER SHIP?
AND I NEED A SQUAD OF TROOPS.
EXCUSE ME?
WHAT'S WRONG, YOU CAN'T SPARE A FEW STORM SOLDIERS?
LISTEN UP! IF YOU FIND ANYTHING THAT CAN USE THE FORCE, BRING IT TO ME!
THEY'RE NEEDED FOR VERY IMPORTANT EXPERIMENTS.
GOT IT.

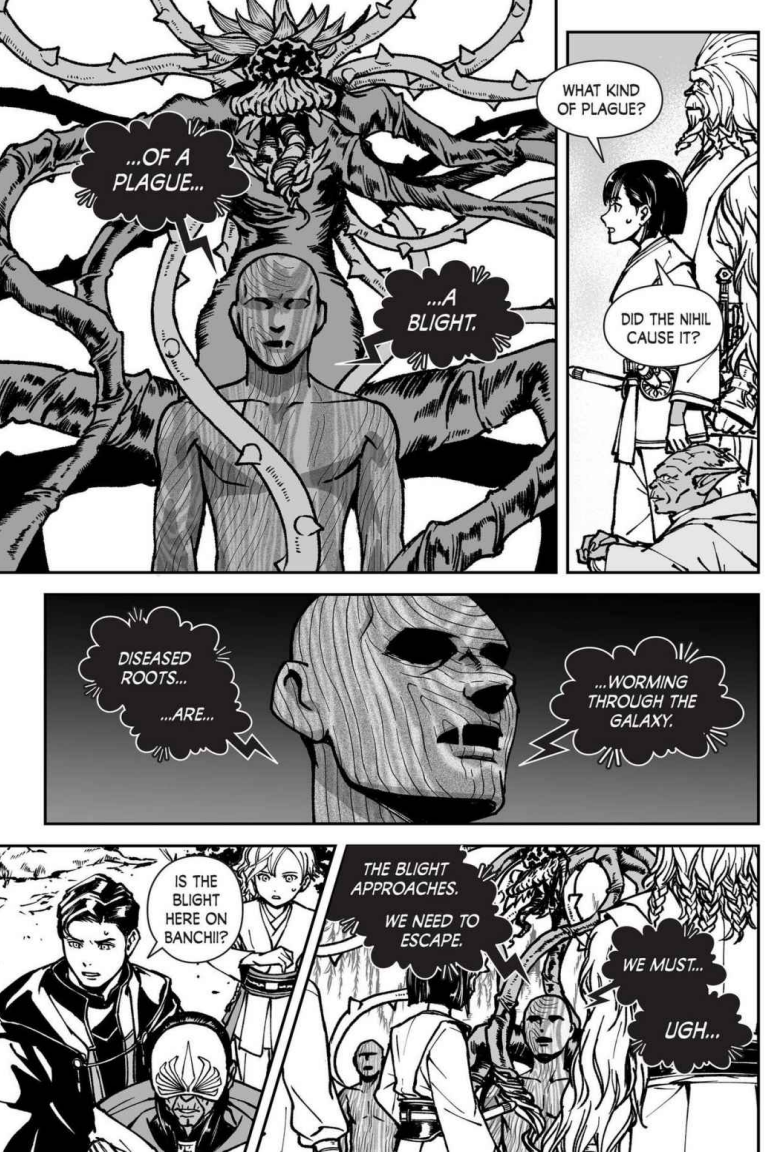

OR ARE YOU TELLING ME TO GO TO BANCHII ALONE?
NOT GOOD.
AFTER THEIR PREPARATIONS ARE DONE, THEY'LL HEAD STRAIGHT TO BANCHII.
BANCHII


PLEASE...
...CAN YOU TELL US WHY YOU'VE APPEARED BEFORE US?
PLEASE.
!
BKSH
BKSH
BKSH


VLSSHHH
THE DRENGIR!!
GET BACK!


WE MUST KILL THEM!
WHHM
WAIT!
MASTER AZLIN! FOCUS ON YOUR SENSES.
I DON'T SENSE ANY INTENT TO ATTACK.
...
...MEAT...
...EAT...
VMMMM
THEY'RE GOING TO ATTACK!


WE HAVE...NO INTENTION...
...TO EAT...
ARE YOU DRENGIR?
YOU RAISED THE DEAD?
WE MUST TELL YOU...
WE WERE FREED...FROM STASIS...
...DURING THE BATTLE...HERE... MONTHS AGO.
WE'VE BECOME AWARE...

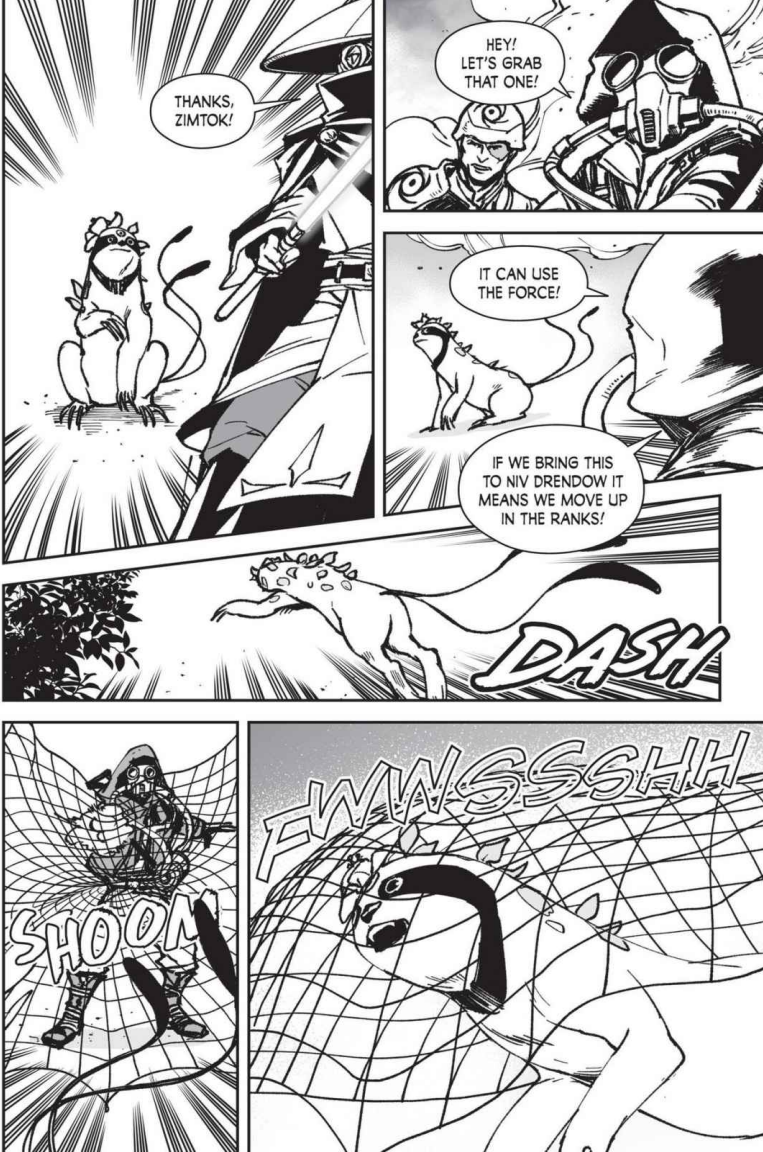

...OF A PLAGUE...
...A BLIGHT.
WHAT KIND OF PLAGUE?
DID THE NIHIL CAUSE IT?
DISEASED ROOTS...
...ARE...
...WORMING THROUGH THE GALAXY.
IS THE BLIGHT HERE ON BANCHII?
THE BLIGHT APPROACHES.
WE NEED TO ESCAPE.
WE MUST...
UGH...


AGHHH
WHAT'S GOING ON?!
THEY'RE NOT REACTING TO US. IT'S SOMETHING ELSE...
URGH!
SOMETHING'S...
...COMING!
VRUUUUU


SO WHERE'S THIS DRENGIR?
SKRREEEEEEE
ASTENBAN
NOT GOOD. I CAN'T GET A SIGNAL TO BANCH!!.
THE STORMWALL IS INTERFERING WITH THE CONNECTION.
ZZSH
ZZSH
THEY'RE MOVING!
WE'RE OUT OF TIME!


NO CHOICE.
KLIK
LET'S DO THIS!
KA BOOM
SORRY FOR ALL THE DESTRUCTION, ZIMTOK.
NOW...
...TIME FOR SOME ACTION!
VWOOM


ZWSHHHH
URK!
WHOMP
VWOOOM
ZSHSHH
CHIII!!
KONK


THANKS, ZIMTOK!
HEY! LET'S GRAB THAT ONE!
IT CAN USE THE FORCE!
IF WE BRING THIS TO NIV DRENDOW IT MEANS WE MOVE UP IN THE RANKS!
DASH
SHOOM
FWWSSSHH

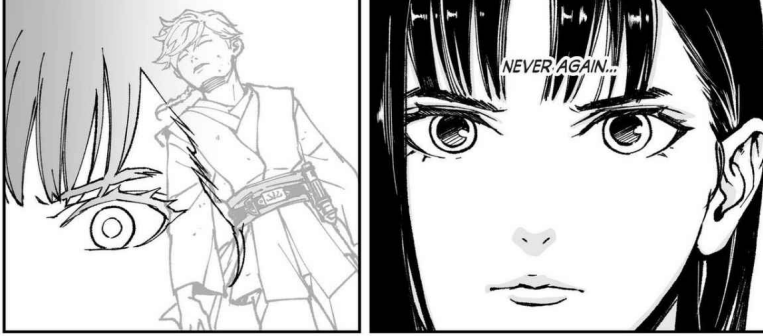

GOTCHA!
GRIP
SKSHH
ZIMTOK!
DASH
VRROOOOOO
RETREAT! LET'S GO, LET'S GO!
CHI!

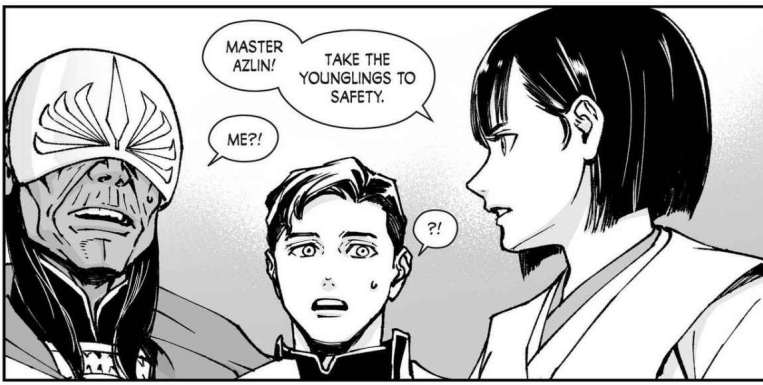

SHOSHO, NO!
DASH
FWIP
VSSHOOOM
KCHAK
VOOOOOSH
OH BOY.


BANCHII
THEY'VE BROUGHT...
...THE NAMELESS.
THOSE CREATURES?
AH, THE DRENGIR. AT LAST.


MY EXPERIMENTS WILL BE GLORIOUS!
PLUS, LOOK AT ALL THOSE JEDI.
IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE YOU LAST FED.
YOU'RE HUNGRY, RIGHT?
RARGGHH
RARRG
GGHH
GO AHEAD AND FEAST.
URGH!
WE NEED...TO GET OUT OF HERE.


IT'S TOO LATE. THEY'RE COMING TO TAKE US AWAY.
ALL WE'LL BE IS DUST.
TO OVERCOME FEAR...
...FACE IT YOU MUST.


NEVER AGAIN...


MASTER AZLIN!
TAKE THE YOUNGLINGS TO SAFETY.
ME?!
?!


ARE YOU SURE?!
YES.


PLEASE, MASTER AZLIN.


...


UNDERSTOOD.
FOLLOW ME!
YES!
WE NEED TO STAY FAR AWAY FROM THE NAMELESS. FIRST, LET'S STOP THE NIHIL, AND...
CHI!
CHI
CHEE
CHI!
CHEE
....!
HOLD ON.
WHAT ARE THEY SAYING?
THEY'RE NOT AFFECTED BY THE NAMELESS.
SO THEY WANT TO HELP DRAW THE NAMELESS AWAY.
DRENGIR...
...CAN YOU HELP US FIGHT?
Seriously?
YES. WE CANNOT LEAVE WHILE THEY'RE HERE.


THEY'RE COMING!!
KSH KSH KSH
KCHK
THIS IS THE MOMENT WE'VE PREPARED FOR.
KCHK
VVMMM
VVMMM
FOR LIGHT AND LIFE!


VZZT
VZZT
RRAAAHH
WATCH OUT!
IT'S A THERMAL DETONATOR!
FWSHH
BOOM
WE DID IT!
HUH?
SWSSSHH


AAAHHHH
WATCH OUT FOR THE DRENGIR!
FWOOOOOO


VVVVVVVV
KSHHHH
VVVVV
IS EVERYONE OKAY?
URGH!
I HOPE THE NAMELESS GET FARTHER AWAY SOON. WHERE ARE THEY?


THE BANCHIIANS ARE LEADING THEM AWAY!
CHI!
CHEE CHEE CHI!
I THOUGHT I SAW THREE OF THEM.
WHERE ARE THE OTHER ONES?
HVFF!
HVFF!
HVFF!
AAH!

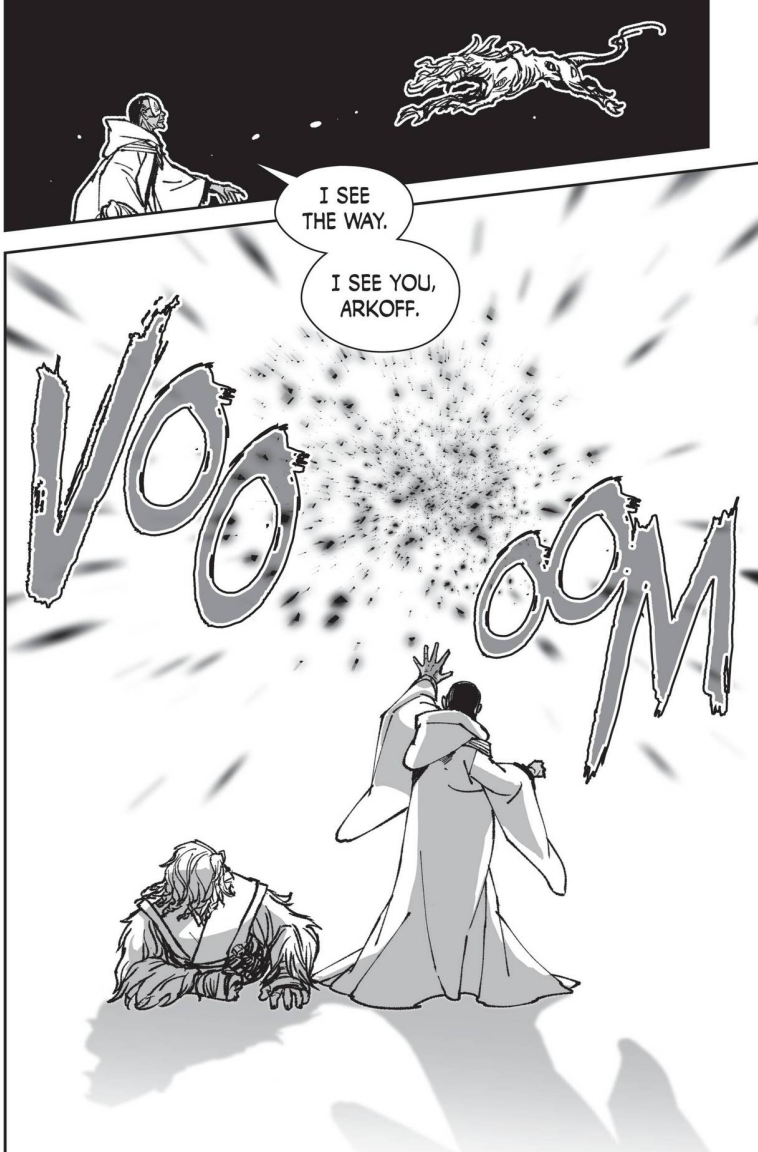

SHRRUUU
A NAMELESS!
WHAT DO WE DO?
YOUNGLINGS!
MASTER YODA!
VIV'NIA AND NIMA, LEAVE WITH MASTER YODA.
MASTER AZLIN?
WHAT WILL YOU DO, HMM?
AS YOU SAID, I NEED TO FACE MY FEAR.


SHRII
!
NOW GO!
THIS WAY!
YES, MASTER!
SHRII KA RAI.
I DID NOT...
...COME HERE...
VWOOOOSH
...TO BE ENGULFED BY FEAR!


SWSH
SHRRIIII
SWSH
SWSH
URGH...
GAH!
THUD
SHRRIIIII


ARKOFF!!
ZWIP
SHRRIII
HWEEEE
HRRRWGYR!
WHOMP


ARKOFF...
...IT'S MY TURN.
I WAS IN DARKNESS FOR A LONG TIME.
BUT...
SHRIII
...I WON'T MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE AGAIN.


I SEE THE WAY.
I SEE YOU, ARKOFF.
VOOOOM


VAAMM
ZWEEEE
URGH!
SHRR!!!!!
IT'S GETTING CLOSER!
THE BANCHIIANS CAN'T HOLD THEM OFF FOREVER!
HOW CAN WE DEFEAT THE NAMELESS?
RU-RU, ARE THOSE BUNKERS WE BUILT BEING USED?


WE'VE BEEN USING THEM AS STORAGE FOR CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS.
THE BUNKERS SHOULD BE DEEP ENOUGH...
...TO KEEP THEM FROM AFFECTING US.
EVERYONE! I HAVE A PLAN!
LEAD THE NAMELESS THIS WAY!
DASH
SHRIIIII
WOOOOOOO


WOOOSH
TMP
FALL INTO THE BUNKER!
WHAT? IT JUMPED OVER!
PASH


SWSHH
SHOOOM
URGH!
I GOT TOO CLOSE TO IT.
THE ROPE WON'T REACH!
PSH


CHII!!
CATCH
WSHH
SHRII
GRIPPP
ZSHHZZZSHHHHH
CHII!!
CHEE!!
CHI!!


SHHRYIIII
SKSH
SKSH
SHHRRIII
SHOOM
THAT WORKED! IT FELL!
SEAL OFF THE BUNKER!


KRMBL
KRMBL
SHRRRRRRR
SSSHHHH
...
...
DID IT WORK?
NOT SO FAST!
VSH
WHOMP
GAH!


THANK YOU FOR FIGHTING ALONGSIDE US.
WHAT?
NO! MY NAMELESS! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO THEM?!
SIR!
THE ASTENBAN CAMP WAS DESTROYED.
?!
BUT THEY WERE ABLE TO CAPTURE A CREATURE THAT USES THE FORCE.
IS THAT SO?
THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH!
THE DRENGIR WILL HAVE TO WAIT.
TIME TO GET OUT OF THIS PLACE!
GO, GO!
VRROOOO


HEY!
DON'T LEAVE US HERE!
LOOKS LIKE YOU WERE ABANDONED.
VSHHHH
HUH?
PSHHHHHH
MORE NIHIL?!


ARE YOU ALL OKAY?!
MASTER SAV!!
MOST OF THE NIHIL ESCAPED.
THEN I WAS TOO LATE.
WHERE ARE NIMA AND VIV'NIA?
THEY'RE SAFE.
MASTER YODA TOOK THEM AWAY FROM THE NAMELESS DURING THE FIGHT.
THEN EVERYONE IS ACCOUNTED FOR.
EXCEPT SHOSHO.
HE GOT CAPTURED BY THE NIHIL ON ASTENBAN.
CAPTURED?!


TO BE PRECISE, HIS FRIEND WAS CAPTURED.
A NATIVE ASTENBAN CREATURE THAT COULD USE THE FORCE.
THEY SEEMED TO BE INTERESTED IN ANYTHING THAT COULD USE THE FORCE.
SHOSHO STOWED AWAY ON THEIR SHIP TO SAVE HER.
THEY'RE PROBABLY HEADED INTO THE OCCLUSION ZONE.
!
TO WHERE BOOLAN IS.
WHO KNOWS WHAT HORRIFIC EXPERIMENTS THEY HAVE IN STORE FOR HER?
THEN...
...I MUST ASK YOU TO GO SAVE SHOSHO AND HIS FRIEND!


I NEED TO REMAIN HERE.
I DON'T THINK BANCHII IS SAFE FROM ANOTHER ATTACK.
I'D ALSO LIKE TO BE HERE WHEN THE YOUNGLINGS RETURN WITH MASTER YODA.
SHOSHO IS OUR FRIEND.
WOULD YOU PLEASE DO THIS, MASTER SAV?
OF COURSE.
WGRRYRRN.
YOU'RE COMING TOO?
YOU DON'T LOOK TOO WELL.
HRGGNWRR.
IF YOU SAY SO, MY FRIEND.
GOODBYE... MASTER.
PAT
DON'T WORRY.
WE CAN RELY ON MASTER SAV AND MASTER ARKOFF TO BRING SHOSHO BACK.
I PROMISE.


VOOOOOSH
MAY THE FORCE BE WITH US.



TO BE CONTINUED IN

THE EDGE OF BALANCE





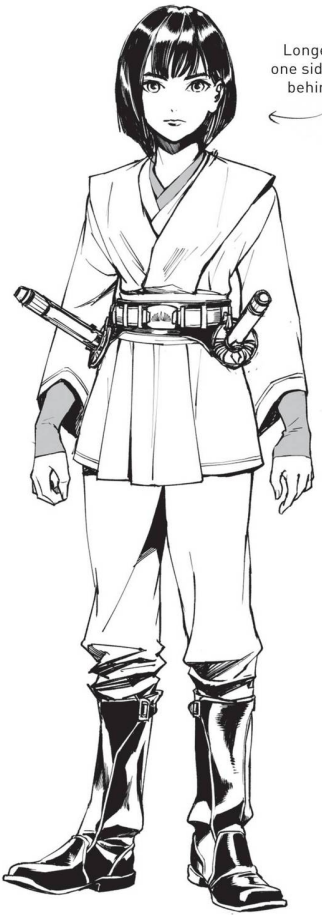
GALLERY

The Art of The Edge of Balance

Development art by
Mizuki Sakakibara and Shima Shinya

Lily Tora-Asi

Jedi Knight

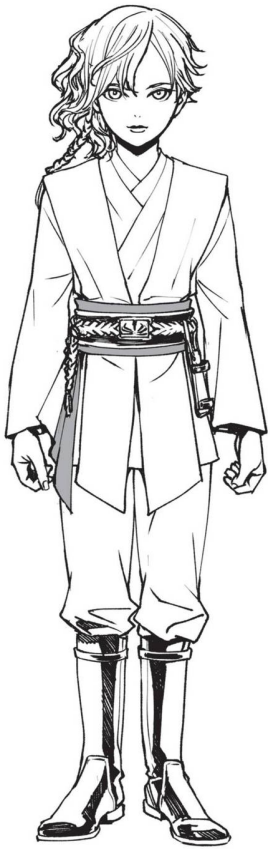


Developed by Mizuki Sakakibara

Viv'nia and Nima

Younglings





Both Viv'nia and Nima have grown slightly taller in the time since the previous volume.

Zimtok



She has moss and plants growing on her for camouflage.





Developed by Shima Shinya


Claws are retracted
when she runs.

Shosho

One of the Banchiian leaders

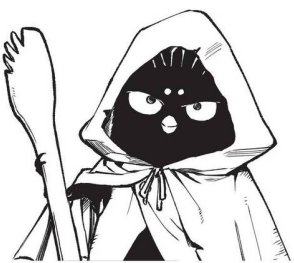












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STAR WARS
THE HIGH REPUBLIC

THE EDGE OF BALANCE

VOLUME THREE

VIZ MEDIA EDITION

Story by SHIMA SHINYA, DANIEL JOSÉ OLDER
Character Designs by MIZUKI SAKAKIBARA and SHIMA SHINYA
Art by MIZUKI SAKAKIBARA

Special thanks to KEVIN PEARL and SAMANTHA KEANE

Translation and Communications SATSUKI YAMASHITA
Design JIMMY PRESLER
Copy Editor JUSTIN HOEGER
Editor SATSUKI YAMASHITA

For Lucasfilm
Senior Editor ROBERT SIMPSON
Associate Editor GRACE ORRISS
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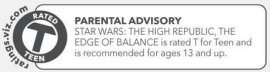
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Printed in the U.S.A.

Published by VIZ Media, LLC
P.O. Box 77010
San Francisco, CA 94107

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
First printing, August 2024





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